



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

July 28, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Chairman

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mike", is placed next to the name "Michael P. Flanagan".

SUBJECT: Presentation on Assessing the Teaching and Learning of Science

At the May 13, 2014, State Board of Education meeting, staff presented a vision for science education, based upon research and the National Research Council's Framework for K-12 Science Education. Today's presentation will examine the range of assessment efforts that can support that vision and address components of the framework. The information shared will also further understanding of a potential timeline to address what can be done at the state, regional, and local levels to transition assessment practices to promote change and improvement.

Following years of stagnant assessment results in science, this past year showed improvement across all grade levels assessed, expanding upon increases last year in elementary and middle school. These efforts may, in part, be the result of leading-edge change in instructional practices due to the cross-cutting standards in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). As a result of the CCSS, teachers across the state are using science as one way to lead students through a variety of informational text with the goal of making meaning from the printed word. Additionally, in anticipation of more rigorous standards for student performance, classroom instruction in science is becoming more rigorous and incorporating practices and content called for by the Framework for K-12 Science Education. There is greater recognition among the education community of the need for increased depth of understanding of science. The goal, in part, is to enhance the science literacy of Michigan's citizens, and to develop skills for a new economy that is more heavily dependent on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics skills and expertise.

Today's presentation is part of a comprehensive picture on the implementation of new practices in teaching, and new learning expectations for students that will continue to be shared through the remainder of 2014. This presentation is designed to provide insight to better understand the needs and considerations necessary to improve science education in Michigan.

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